

# The Historiographer

of the Episcopal Diocese of Connecticut

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## REPORT OF THE ARCHIVIST AND HISTORIOGRAPHER

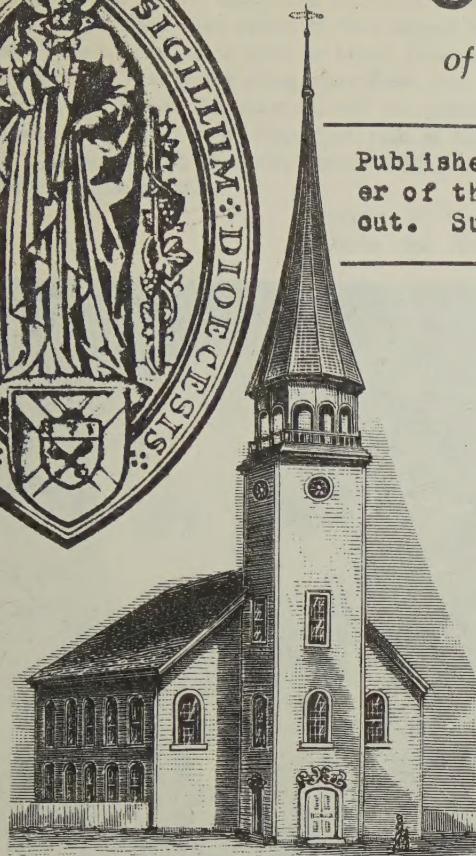
During this brief period before an eventual global war, there are a few important matters which no parish and no diocese—least of all our vulnerable Eastern dioceses—can afford to ignore. Thanks to a canon law operating throughout the English Church in the middle ages, the episcopal registers from the middle of the twelfth century were carefully kept and have survived. Most of them today are in print and are rich in Church lore and personality. Some of Chaucer's Canterbury pilgrims stalk through the Bishop's court and appear in the Latin summaries of his right-reverend judgments. Thank to an Elizabethan canon law, baptisms and other sacramental acts had to be registered in stout books, kept within the parish precincts, the basis of our own canon law on records, so that today it is easier to secure a certificate of Shakespeare's baptism, of April, 1564, than it is to get one for Agatha Smithwick, baptized in 1875 in some of our parishes. Thanks to a patriotic organization in Connecticut, during the last fifteen years, any parish in the state, with a register of sacramental acts, no longer in *active* use, may have it photostated without charge, and cared for without charge. The original or the photostat is donated to the co-operating parish. A great many of the far-sighted business men on our vestries have already jumped at this opportunity to have precious records of their church life photographically copied the better to insure survival. We beg you all to look to the safety, that is, to the duplication, of your important records at once.

A new policy, being established at the Archives this year, attempts to scatter duplicated records. For example, if the original of any manuscript be kept in Hartford, the copies or the photostats must not be allowed to remain here. They must be shipped promptly to some other town, to some other depository. (We are even planning to build up a duplicate collection underground.) I wish we had more funds, for we should like to put upon filmstrips several thousands of our precious early letters, most of which are still unknown to historians. In a limited way, we shall continue in the *Historiographer of the Diocese of Connecticut*, the new periodical to which we introduced you at the last convention, to reproduce some of our rarest documents, and in the near future, we hope to reproduce especially the famous Seabury documents, recently discovered at the General Seminary and made available to us, in photostats, through the courtesy of Mrs. George Goss.

But our most important new policy concerns history in the making. It is essential that year by year each parish assist us in the compilation of its ongoing history. Three centuries hence, the parish life of our day can be more easily captured through files of yearbooks and bulletins than through Baptismal registers. The Case Memorial Library is wisely making every effort and as fast as it can, to build up files of the literature current in Connecticut Congregational parishes. In this connection and from an archival viewpoint, the most advanced Anglican Diocese in America is that of Massachusetts, whose canon law requires each priest with cure to appoint a Parish Historian—not to write history—but to gather it, and to transmit once or twice yearly to the Diocesan Archives a sheaf of the newspaper clippings, bulletins, yearbooks, minstrel programs, and pictures that belong to that year. And these "historians" form a Diocesan Organization, alert to safeguard valuable records everywhere. Laity want to serve the Church, but we often say we haven't jobs enough. This new office can be a most important one for an able layman, for clergy who have parishioners of unusual devotion, and for us in the Diocesan Ark as well. We are asking rectors voluntarily to appoint such a person as a "collector" of current history and to transmit to us for a roster which, in the fall, we hope

TRINITY CHURCH, NEW HAVEN.

First Building, 1752.



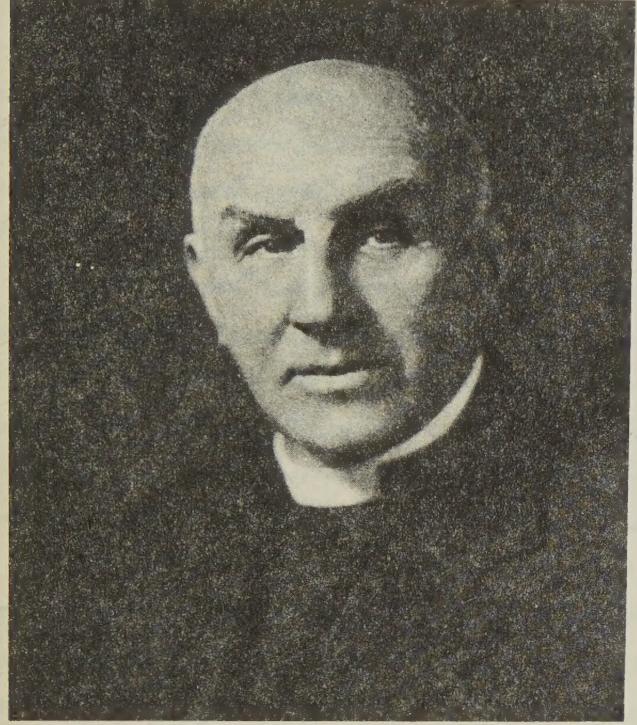
**The Seal of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, the activities of which strategically prepared the ground for the organization of the present Diocese of Connecticut----the first see in the Western hemisphere.**



published in the Connecticut Churchman, the names and addresses of your pointees.

In the Jewish Midrash, the rabbis say that the rock from which Moses brought forth water, continued to satisfy the Israelites by rolling along through the desert after them. That is a delightful mythological statement of the fact. God's grace did follow them—He continued their Ebenezer—the rock of their help. St. Paul even refers to that legend when he says that the Israelites all ate of that same spiritual bread (manna) and drank of that same spiritual rock that rolled along after them, and, though they knew it not, that Rock was Christ. We must see that our policies and traditions are maintained today. Our most important task is to gather contemporary parish history for use centuries hence. Will you kindly keep that rock of tradition rolling along?

KENNETH W. CAMERON  
Archivist and Historiographer



William Agur Beardsley, Registrar  
from 1917 to 1946

In the right-hand column appears an extract from the [Purdie and Dixon] *Virginia Gazette* for April 1, 1773. The plight of one of our Church women, her trial, and the consequences thereof will, doubtless, interest our readers. (The photostat was supplied us by the Rev. G. McLaren Brydon, D.D., Registrar and Historiographer of the Diocese of Virginia.)

GRANVILLE County, NORTH CAROLINA,  
FEBRUARY 19, 1773.

Departed this Life, in the fiftieth Year of his Age, THOMAS LOW THIMBLE, after a long Series of Drunkenness. It may with Truth be said, that no Man ever died less regretted: The Sound of his last Trumpet gave a general Joy to all his Friends, as well as those who had the Misfortune to be of his Acquaintance. Take Hood, ye Sons of Bacchus, that when Death comes with his Summons you may not be caught napping; as, you see, was the Case with Mr. Thimble.

GLOUCESTER, April 1, 1773.  
I HAVE a BRIG that will sail in three Weeks for Madeira, and shall be much obliged to any Gentlemen who may want Wines from thence to favour me with their Commands.

JOHN PERRIN.

## From the E S S E X G A Z E T T E.

To the P R I N T E R.

By inserting the following (which of an ancient Date) you will doubtless oblige many of your Readers, besides yours, &c.

The Speech of Miss POLLY BAKER, before a Court of Judicature, at Connecticut, near Boston, in New England; where she was prosecuted, the fifth Time, for having a Bastard Child.

MAY it please the Honourable Bench to indulge me in a few Words. I am a poor unhappy Woman, who have no Money to fee Lawyers to plead for me, being hard put to it to get a tolerable Living. I shall not trouble your Honours with long Speeches; for I have not the Presumption to expect that you may, by any Means, be prevailed on to deviate in your Sentence from the Law in my Favour. All I humbly hope is, that your Honours would charitably move the Governor's Goodness on my Behalf, that my Fine may be remitted. This is the fifth Time, Gentlemen, that I have been dragged before your Court on the same Account; twice have I paid heavy Fines, and twice have been brought to publick Punishment, for Want of Money to pay those Fines. This may have been agreeable to the Laws, and I do not dispute it; but since Laws are sometimes unreasonable in themselves, and therefore repealed, and others bear too hard on the Subject in particular Circumstances, and therefore there is left a Power somewhat to dispense with the Execution of them, I take the Liberty to say that I think this Law, by which I am punished, is both unreasonable in itself and particularly severe with Regard to me, who have always lived an inoffensive Life in the Neighbourhood where I was born, and defy my Enemies (if I have any) to say I ever wronged Man, Woman, or Child. Abstracted from the Law, I cannot conceive, may it please your Honours, what the Nature of my Offence is. I have brought five fine Children into the World, at the Risk of my Life; I have maintained them well by my own Industry, without burthening the Township, and would have done it better if it had not been for the heavy Charges and Taxes I have paid. Can it be a Crime in me (in the Nature of Things I mean) to add to the Number of the King's Subjects, in a new Country, that really wants People? I own it, I should think it a Praise-worthy rather than a punishable Action. I have detached no other Woman's Husband, nor enticed any Youth. These Things I never was charged with; nor has any one the least Cause of Complaint against me, unless perhaps, the Minister, or Justice, because I have had Children without being married, by which they have avoided a Wedding Fee. But can this be a Fault of mine? I appeal to your Honours. You are pleased to allow I do not want Sons, but I must be stupified to the last Degree not to prefer the honourable State of Wedlock to the Condition I have lived in. I always was, and still am, willing to enter into it, and doubt not my behaving well in it; having all the Industry, Frugality, Fertility, and Skill in Economy, appertaining to a good Wife's Character. I defy any Person to say I ever refused an Offer of that Sort; on the contrary, I readily consented to the only Proposal of Marriage that ever was made me, which was when I was a Virgin; but too easily confiding in the Person's Singularity that made it, I unhappily lost my own Honour, by trusting to his, for he got me with Child, and then forsook me. That very Person you all know; he is now become a Magistrate of this County, and I had Hopes he would have appeared this Day on the Bench, and have endeavoured to moderate the Court in my Favour. Then I should have scorned to mention it; but I must now complain of it, as unjust and unequal, that my Betrayer and Undoer, the first Cause of all my Faults and Misfortunes (if they must be deemed such) should be advanced to Honour and Power in the Government, that punishes my Misfortunes with Scipes and Infamy. I should be told, it is like, that, were there no Act of Assembly in the Case, the Precepts of Religion are violated by my Transgressions. If sinning is a religious Offence, leave it to religious Punishments. You have already excluded me from the Comforts of your Church Communion: Is not that sufficient? You believe I have offended Heaven, and must suffer eternal Fire: Will not that be sufficient? What Need is there then of your additional Fines, and Whipping? I own, I do not think as you do; for, if I thought what you call Sinnes really such, I could not presumptuously commit them. But can it be believed that Heaven is angry at my having Children, when, to the little done by me towards it, God has been pleased to add his divine Skill, and admirable Workmanship, in the Formation of their Bodies, and crowning it, by furnishing them with rational and immortal Souls? Forgive me, Gentlemen, if I talk a little extravagantly on these Matters. I am no Divine; but if you, Gentlemen, must be making Laws, do not turn natural and useful Actions into Crimes, by your Prohibitions. But take into your wise Consideration the great and growing Number of Bachelors in the Country, many of whom, from the mean Fear of the Expenses of a Family, have never sincerely and honorably courted a Woman in their Lives; and, in their Manner of Living, leave unprovided (which is little better than Murder) Hundreds of their Posterity to the thousandth Generation. Is not this a greater Offence against the publick Good than mine? Compel them then, by Law, either to Marriage, or to pay double the Fine of Fornication every Year. What must poor young Women do, whom Custom has forbid to solicit the Men, and who cannot force themselves upon Husbands, when the Laws take no Care to provide them any, and yet severely Punish them if they do their Duty without them! The Duty of the first and great Command of Nature, and of Nature's God. Increase and multiply; a Duty, from the steady Performance of which nothing has been able to deter me, but, for its Sake, I have hazarded the Loss of the publick Esteem, and have frequently endued publick Disgrace and Punishment; and therefore ought, in my humble Opinion, instead of a Whipping, to have a Statue erected to my Memory.

This Speech influenced the Court to dispense with her Punishment, and induced one of her Judges to marry her the next Day, by whom she had fifteen Children.



To the Most Reverend the Archbishop of Canterbury, President, and the  
Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts,  
now about to celebrate its fourth Jubilee, the Bishop, Clergy, and Laity of the  
Diocese of Connecticut, assembled in Convention on this  
twelfth day of June in the year 1900, send greeting in the Lord.

We have always been mindful, Fathers and Brethren, of the fact that our Diocese, the first organized in America, is indebted, under God, almost for her foundation and certainly for "a long continuance of nursing care and protection" to your venerable Society. On every page of our colonial history is some record telling of the solicitude for our spiritual welfare which guided its counsels and of the confidence with which we appealed to its sympathy and liberality. More than forty of our young men crossed the ocean that they might receive authority to minister to their kinsfolk and neighbours in sacred things; and they went with a two-fold commendation, to the Bishops from whom they sought their commission and to the Society whose assistance was in nearly every case necessary that they might duly exercise their ministry! And so generously and judiciously was that assistance given that when the change of civil government compelled its withdrawal our Diocese, after it had obtained the episcopate, was able humbly yet confidently to assume the responsibilities which rested upon it.

Many have been the tokens of Divine blessing upon us in the years that are past, and far beyond the desert of our labours has been the harvest gathered for the Church of Christ in this portion of God's great field; while both by the permanence and increase of results where the seed was first sown by our fathers under your guidance, and by the growth and progress in those parts of our State to which the same seed has been brought by men of a later generation, we are ever reminded that God entrusted to your hands the care of the first planting and watering, and that the trust was faithfully undertaken and faithfully discharged.

We repeat therefore the greetings which were sent to you by our Diocese at the close of your third Jubilee, but with gratitude deepened by another half-century of the study of history and experience, with recognition of the continual blessing which has rewarded your former service, by the opportunities of richer service, and with confident assurance that He Who has begun and continued a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. And to our greetings we join our thanksgivings and our prayers, most earnestly beseeching our Heavenly Father that He will ever bless and prosper all that is designed or done by your venerable Society for the proclamation of His Gospel to the world and for the edifying of His Church and the hastening of His Kingdom.

On behalf and by order of the Convention:

Samuel Hart, D.D., LL.D.

Frederick John Kingsbury, LL.D.

Burton Bancroft, LL.B.

William M. Stark, M.A., LL.D.

Charles P. Brewster, D.D.

Bishop of Connecticut

Edwin Howland, D.D.

Samuel F. Jarvis, M.A.

Ralph Hotter, M.A.



# Yale University

Collègii Yaleensis quod est New Portu Connecticute  
civis. Omnis his heraldis persumit. Salutem in Domino  
superterram. Vobis notum sit quod Summorum Senatus  
gradus etenim Academum Gradum sufficiente probatum.  
Hoc placet. Titulo Gradus Artium liberorum Illustri,  
adornare. Condecorare. donare. concedentes ei. omnia Dura,  
Privilegio. Signatae. Honores ad eundem Gradum spec-  
iaalia. In cuius Rei Testimonium, communis Academie  
Sigillum. Nomina nostra apposuimus.

Datum die 11 Collègii predicti. Septembre anni . m .  
Anno Christi mccccccc septimecentes quinquaginta primo

John Eliot }  
Joseph Rogers }  
Samuel Shabury }  
Elizabeth Williams }

YALE UNIVERSITY CONFERRED THE  
DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS ON  
SAMUEL SHABURY, September 11, 1751.

(This is one of the documents recently  
discovered at the General Theological  
Seminary in New York City.)



Daniel Brown was one of the Yale Congregationalists who declared for Episcopacy, resigned their tutorial posts, and sought ordination in England. Brown sailed with Samuel Johnson and Timothy Cutler, and was elevated to the priesthood by the Bishop of Norwich. The S.P.G. assigned Johnson to Stratford, Cutler to the new Christ Church about to be opened in Boston. Brown was to take charge of the vacant mission at Bristol in Rhode Island, but he died of smallpox a week following his second ordination, on Easter even, and was buried in England.

Dear Brother

London Feb 25-1722/23

This is to let you know that through the goodness of God, we arrived safe in London having been 5 weeks and 4 days upon the sea. The passage was longer than is usual at that time of the year, by reason of the contrary and stormy winds we had, for a considerable time together. We went ashore near the mouth of the River Thames, and went to Canterbury a very ancient City, where is a very famous old church building, both within and without. From Canterbury we passed through the City of Rochester, in the Stage Coach to London, on the 20<sup>th</sup> of Decemb<sup>r</sup>. We have all had our health very well since our arrival, except Mr. Cutler who has been sick of the small pox, but is now recovered; He had the Distemper favourably, and was attended by a very good Physician, who was particularly kind to him, and has promised to do the same for Mr. Johnson & my self if here be occasion. We were not with Mr. Cutler when he took the Small Pox, we have been from him 23 days, and all to think that we have it and we may fear it will meet with us in London, all last, that have never been visited with that Distemper ever are not greatly concerned about it, leaving the matter to divine disposal. We have been treated with all possible care by the Bishops and other Ministers of the Church of England, who we find are not such frightfull People, as you in that country are used to believe. The Honourable Society for propagating the gospel, have granted all our requests; and have appointed me to be their Missionary at New Bristol where there is a very pretty church built, and a very promising congregation. We do not intend to make a long stay here, but shall prepare for a return as we can: I hope to be at home by the middle of May or beginning of June. Shew this Letter to my Honoured, & dear Mother, to whom I here present my Duty, and my Dear love to You, and Isaac, & Mary: I pray God preserve You all in Unity and Peace, especially in the Affairs that are upon Your hands. Pray for me that I may be preserved from every evil here, and in due time may be returned to You. Give my kindest respects to all Friends: I am,

Your affectionate Brother

Timothy Cutler

